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MEDIA FACT SHEET

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Census puts our ageing population in perspective

- The Australian population aged slightly in the 10 years between 1996 and 2006. In 1996, children under 15 years made up almost 22% of the population. In 2006, just under 20% were children. Over the same period, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over increased slightly, from 12% to 13%. This older population increased by almost 500,000 people, while children increased by about 100,000. The proportion of the population that was working age (between 15–64 years) remained stable between 1996 and 2006 at around 66%, while the numbers increased by 1.51 million.
- Between 1996 and 2006, the largest increase by age-group was for those aged between 50 and 59 years – increasing from 10% to 13% of the total population (from around 1.8 million to 2.6 million people). As this group enters retirement age over the next 20 years, there will be important implications for the Australian workforce. Conversely, those entering the workforce (aged between 15–24) fell slightly as a proportion of the total population since 1996 (from 14.5% to 13.6%), but increased in number by around 130,000.
- Males continued the long-term trend of slightly outnumbering females up to the mid-twenties. From that age, women generally outnumbered the men. In 1996, women slightly outnumbered men at every age between 25 and 46; and in 2006, the men were outnumbered from ages 27 to 57. In this age group range, the biggest gap between women and men was at 35 years, with over 9000 (or 6.1%) more women than men. Since 1996, the number of women over the age of 85 has remained around twice the number of men.
- The median age in Australia was 37 years. South Australians and Tasmanians had a median age of 39 years, the highest of all the states and territories. Around 15% of the population in these two states were aged 65 years and over. The Northern Territory had the youngest population of all states and territories, with a median age of 31 years. One-quarter of their population was aged under 15 years, five percentage points higher than Australia as a whole.
- Queenscliffe (Victoria), Victor Harbour (South Australia) and Bribie Island (Queensland) were the statistical local areas that had the oldest populations in Australia, with almost one-third aged 65 years and over. The Mornington Peninsula (South) in Victoria and the Great Lakes area in New South Wales also had a higher than average proportion of their population aged 65 years and over.
- Four of the five statistical local areas with the highest proportion of babies and toddlers in 2006 were found in Queensland.

NB: The figures in this fact sheet exclude overseas visitors. Where an answer to a question has not been provided (i.e. not stated) these occurrences form a separate category in the data and therefore some percentages do not total to 100%.

Source: ABS 2006 Census.

Figure 1. Age and sex distribution (1996 Census and 2006 Census)

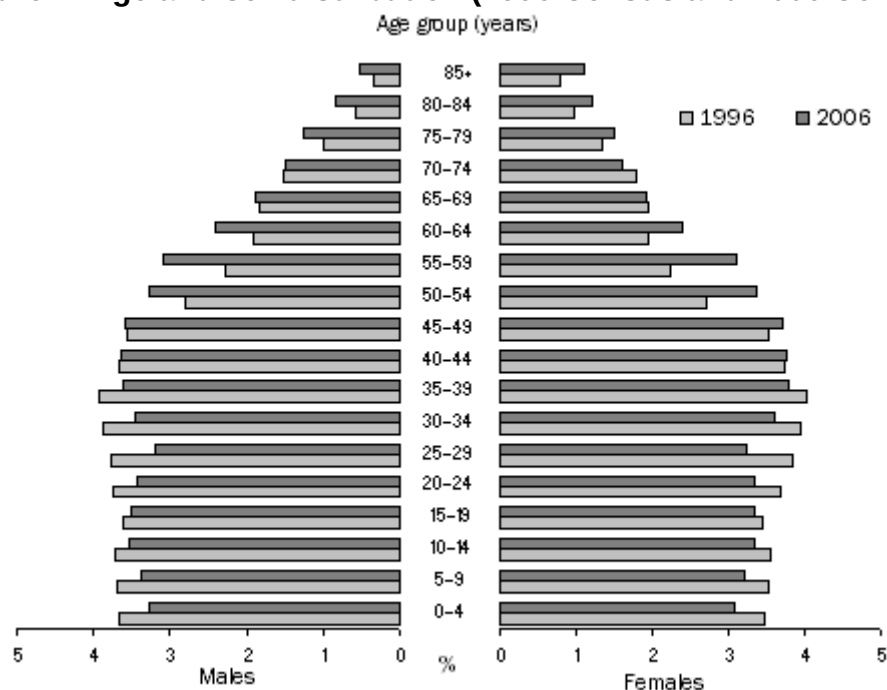


Table 1. Age distribution, Australian population 2006 Census and 1996 Census

	2006		1996	
	' 000	%	' 000	%
0-4 years	1 260.4	6.3	1 264.9	7.1
0-14 years	3 937.2	19.8	3 837.9	21.6
15-64 years	13 273.7	66.9	11 764.0	66.3
65 years and over	2 644.4	13.3	2 150.9	12.1
85 years and over	322.8	1.6	199.3	1.1
Total population	19 855.3		17 752.8	

Table 2. 2006 Census: Age distribution and median age of states and territories

	0-14 years	15-64 years	65 years and over	Median age
	%	%	%	
New South Wales	19.8	66.3	13.8	37
Victoria	19.3	67.0	13.7	37
Queensland	20.7	67.0	12.4	36
South Australia	18.5	66.1	15.4	39
Western Australia	20.2	67.7	12.0	36
Tasmania	19.7	65.3	14.9	39
Northern Territory	24.7	70.5	4.8	31
Australian Capital Territory	19.1	71.1	9.7	34
Australia	19.8	66.9	13.3	37

Table 3. 2006 Census: Statistical Local Areas with highest proportion of population aged 65 years and over, for states and territories

State	Statistical Local Area	% of population aged 65 years and over	no. aged 65 years and over	Total population
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Victoria	Queenscliffe (B)	32.4	978	3 018
	Mornington P'sula (S) - South	28.0	13 214	47 118
South Australia	Victor Harbour (C)	32.3	3 880	12 013
	Yorke Peninsula (DC) - North	25.1	1 839	7 332
Queensland	Bribie Island	32.0	5 099	15 914
	Coolangatta	25.9	1 262	4 871
New South Wales	Great Lakes (A)	27.7	9 090	32 760
	Tweed (A) - Tweed-Heads	26.5	13 360	50 451
Australian Capital Territory	Page	23.6	634	2 692
	Deakin	21.5	559	2 606
Western Australia	Mandurah (C)	20.9	11 652	55 817
	Albany (C) - Central	20.5	3 269	15 976
Tasmania	Glamorgan/Spring Bay (M)	19.7	823	4 188
	Central Coast (M) - Pt A	18.8	3 302	17 593
Northern Territory	The Gardens	13.4	76	567
	Alice Springs (T) - Heavitree	11.1	238	2 146

Table 4. 2006 Census: Statistical Local Areas with highest proportion of population aged 0-4 years, for states and territories

State	Statistical Local Area	% of population aged 0-4 years	no. aged 0-4 years	Total population
Queensland	Badu (IC)	16.0	131	821
	Doomadgee (S)	15.1	164	1 083
Northern Territory	Daguragu (CGC)	14.8	80	542
	Thamarrurr (CGC)	14.6	281	1 930
Australian Capital Territory	Amaroo	12.6	693	5 505
	Gungahlin	11.0	423	3 853
Victoria	Wyndham (C) - South	11.9	1 908	16 013
	Melton (S) - East	10.8	4 277	39 482
Western Australia	Ashburton (S)	11.0	667	6 080
	Mount Marshall (S)	10.6	65	613
South Australia	Roxby Downs (M)	10.4	420	4 056
	Anangu Pitjantjatjara (AC)	9.1	204	2 235
New South Wales	Brewarrina (A)	9.4	182	1 943
	Blacktown (C) - South-West	8.9	8 322	93 665
Tasmania	Brighton (M)	8.8	1 237	14 122
	Georgetown (M) - Pt A	7.3	402	5 503

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